

# The Murrumbidgee Naturalist



September 2022 - Issue #307

Journal of the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc.

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## Objectives

To facilitate and promote the knowledge of natural history, and to encourage the preservation and protection of the Australian natural environment, especially that of the Murrumbidgee River Valley

**Black-winged  
Stilts  
on the wing  
by  
Nella Smith**



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## CONTRIBUTIONS

For the October 2022 issue by  
Wednesday 5 October

To Rowena Whiting

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Phone: 6953 2612

**"Wisdom begins with putting the  
right name on a thing" old  
Chinese proverb**

## Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc. Office Bearers and Annual Subscriptions

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<b>Treasurer:</b>	Glenn Currie	0488 563 321		Kathy Tenison	6953 4869

**MEETINGS** are held on the second Thursday each month, except January, at the Henry Lawson Room, Leeton Library, Sycamore Street, Leeton at 7pm.

**FIELD TRIPS** NORMALLY TAKE PLACE ON THE FOLLOWING WEEKEND.

INTENDING NEW MEMBERS, GUESTS AND VISITORS WELCOME.

### Membership enquiries:

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**Annual Subscriptions:** Family \$45.00 Adult/Single \$35.00 Journal only/Concession \$25.00

**Bank details for direct deposit:** BSB 082 672 account no. 722043387, a/c name: Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc. Include your own name and description of payment in the reference box.

Opinions expressed by authors are their own and do not necessarily represent the policies or views of the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc.

## Welcome to the September issue

A very sad time for us all with the news that Max O'Sullivan has passed away and we realise he will no longer be amongst us. However, memories of him will live on in many ways including the numerous stories and articles he has written over the years with the club.

He was always there for the newsletter with various contributions and compiling the ever popular sightings page; also as a checker of the bird names (so please forgive any future mistakes!). As a tribute, I have chosen an article he wrote in 2007 about the Parrots of the Riverina to reprint in this issue; one of the reasons he chose to move here. He did subsequently write an update, may be for another time... Kathy & Phil Tenison have written a lovely tribute for Max.

It may have seemed a long time coming but Spring is certainly with us now. Our wildflower walk at Narrandera was a treat with a huge show of wattles and many other flowers. This month we will be visiting the Taleeban Mining Reserve, another place we keep returning to for the mallee wildflowers. Then there is the Koala Festival in Narrandera, do come along and support the Club's display. Likewise for the Leeton Show. Details are in the Coming events.

I should mention that Alan Whitehead only saw 1 Black Swan at the Narrandera Wetlands; (highlights the dangers of cut and paste!!)

There is plenty to be involved with this month, hope to you see there.

Meanwhile, enjoy the read. **Rowena.**

### September is Biodiversity Month with Threatened Species Day on 7 September

Threatened Species Day was declared in 1996 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the death of the last remaining Tasmanian tiger (also known as the thylacine) at Hobart Zoo in 1936.

Threatened Species Day is a time to reflect on what happened in the past and how similar fates to the thylacine could await other native plants and animals unless appropriate action is taken.

In New South Wales alone there are close to 1,000 animal and plant species at risk of extinction. This website gives information about the various conservation programs and partnerships.

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/threatened-species/>

## Tribute to Max O'Sullivan

Max joined the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Club in 2007 when he moved to Leeton. He soon became an active member, leading walks, serving on the committee for a number of years then became president in 2014 for 3 years and latterly as a vice president. He was also the sightings coordinator and housed some of the club's equipment at his home. He also represented the club on BigNet and the Bittern Project. We have so much to thank him for and extend our sincere sympathy to his family.



### Rowena Whiting

#### Kath and Phil Tenison have written...

What a loss for us all. The passing of Max has left us all deeply saddened. He was a gentleman with a great sense of humour and a generous soul when it came to teaching others about his beloved birds. He was extremely well travelled and had an interesting story about every place on earth. Very rarely did we mention a location he hadn't been. A wonderful conversationalist who could discuss anything brought to the table.

He spent hours making bird lists for EWAG (Environmental Water Advisory Group), Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists and finding Bitterns to report in the breeding season. He also reported miss management of roadsides and reserves in the hope restorative action would be taken.

Another job was clearing the walkway at Campbell's Swamp, he regularly carried out this activity to ensure the hide was open for all to enjoy the wetland birds.

He helped hundreds of travellers who came to Leeton and Griffith fast track their sighting's introducing them to the fabulous little diamonds of vegetation he had discovered on his many outings to investigate the area.

Knowing what birds feed where and what time of year they come in was a specialty of his. We knew when the Dollarbird was in town and when the Painted Honeyeaters had come to stay and when they left.

His bird lists on local TSRs were invaluable. We all started to get a feel for who lives where. One of his favourite day's in the birding calendar was the Twitchathon. Being in the Silly Galahs team with Max was an honour many of us got to enjoy. We travelled from Leeton to Griffith and back again. Eight solid hours of birdwatching sometimes over two days. Watching him put the binoculars down at lunchtime was almost cruel. But they were the rules.



He very rarely got out of the car without binoculars on and conversations were often had with his head moving side to side looking for movement in the vegetation. Not much got past him.

The thing that amazed us was that it wouldn't matter how many times he saw a particular bird he would be equally delighted and it didn't seem to matter if the bird was quite a common species.

His home was planted with natives and little Superb Fairy-wrens would come to the window and visit him. They were definitely friends of Max's.

He was well entertained during covid and spent a lot of time adding to his year list. Max loved Leeton and surrounds for the variety of birds it had to offer and never tired of going to Fivebough, Wattle Dam, Campbell's Swamp or Cocoparra National Park.

Not to forget his hours and hours of volunteer work for the Leeton and District Community.

We are so glad Max chose Leeton as his home. We are all richer for knowing Max.

## Oxley and Cunningham's Journey in the Cocoparras

[A summary of the presentation Eric gave at the August meeting.]

By the time Oxley and Cunningham reached the Cocoparra Ranges or as Oxley named them Peels Ranges, they were desperate to find water and also feed for the horses. On June 3<sup>rd</sup> 1817 Oxley climbed Mt. Caley which Cunningham had done the day before. He saw an open grassy patch to the south and decided that was the place for the night's camp. At least the horses would have some feed. On returning from the climb he found that one of the horses had died.

The grassy patch was in the south-east corner of Binya State Forest not far from the highway. The present monument is actually 1km to the east. The feed was good but no water could be found. Nevertheless he stayed there until the 6<sup>th</sup> even though he had to send the horses back around 8 miles to the last place with water. In the meantime he sent two men to explore to the south-west (his intended route). They went as far as around Yenda through the same thick dry scrub they had encountered previously.

Oxley was forced to change his planned route, this time to travel north-west in the hope of regaining the Lachlan (or even the Macquarie). First he had to get past the Cocoparras so headed westward before changing course. His route here was a few hundred metres north of the Burley Griffin Way, until just before the present Whitton Stock Route. The next camp was near the north-western corner of the western block of the Binya State Forest. It took two hours to find a small hole containing water at the foot of the ranges.

From this camp he proceed north-west to reach the northern end of the MacPherson Range only having to retreat due to the lack of water and no prospect of finding any. A change of plan again, Oxley decided to follow the western edge of the Cocoparras hoping for water along this route. He was immediately successful at MacGregors Creek and stayed for four nights to help the horses recover.

Whilst at MacGregors Creek, Cunningham ascended a ridge up to MacGregors Tops (on June 10<sup>th</sup>) and back down the creek. A walk I had intended to lead for our June outing which unfortunately had to be cancelled.

### Eric Whiting

Reference: Tracking and Mapping the Explorers, Volume 1 The Lachlan River Oxley, Evans and Cunningham 1817, John Whitehead, 2003.

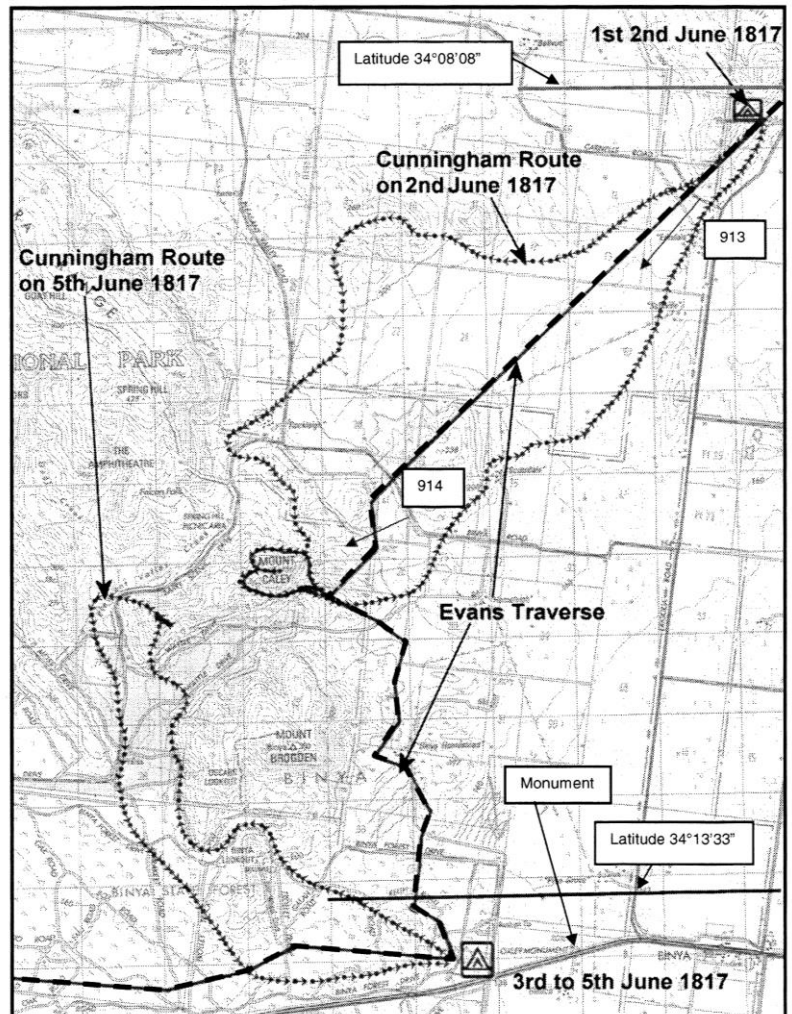


Fig 9.16 The approach and explorations in the vicinity of Mt Caley, Mt Brogden, Yenda and the Cocoparra National Park

### The State of the Environment Report

At long last the Federal Government has released the much overdue State of the Environment Report. Dismal reading with reports of catastrophic declines in the numbers of native plants and animals and their likely causes. It does recognise the importance of the environment to our wellbeing.

It can be found at <https://soe.dcceew.gov.au/> Other environment sites have their own synopsis including Murrumbidgee Landcare and Birdlife.

## Narrandera Landcare's 2022 Wildflower Walk

Narrandera Landcare had perfect weather for their 2022 Wildflower Walk. The walk was on a Saturday afternoon through a small section of Bundidgerry Hill and close to 60 people came along to discover, learn about, and enjoy the spring wildflowers.

The Landcare group were very surprised at the amount of people who came along for the walk, and thought it was great to see the interest in the local flora. They checked the route on the Friday and were a little disappointed in the amount of species flowering, but one sunny day made a big difference and there were lots to see on the Saturday.

Participants were given laminated handouts with photos and the names of some of the species with QR code links to websites with more information on the relevant plant.

As well as local participants, people came from Leeton, Coleambally and Goolgowi. Members of Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists were on hand to share their tremendous knowledge. After the walk participants enjoyed afternoon tea at the Narrandera's Community Food Garden.

Our thanks to Glenn for organising this walk and inviting Field Nats and to him along with Nella for leading.



Photos: Glenn briefing the group a before starting the walk;  
A view of the hill with wattles in flower both by Kathy Tenison  
Leopard Orchid *Diuris pardina* (left)  
Pink Fingers *Caladenia fuscata*  
Pale Sundew (below)  
Scarlet Sundew (next page) all by Rowena Whiting,

Sundews were one of the plants that caught the attention of

most people. We found the Pale Sundew *Drosera peltata*. This plant has sticky gland tipped hairs around the margins of the leaves, their job being to trap insects. The leaf then folds over the victim and slowly digests it. In this way the plants supplements its food source in an otherwise poor nutrient habitat.

A patch of Scarlet Drosera *Drosera glanduligera* stood out amongst the lichens on a bare area. With leaves flat on the ground, insects can walk up to the leaves and most likely meet only one tentacle which would be insufficient to trap it. Instead this sundew has another trick up its sleeve. The marginal





tentacles on the leaf do not have sticky tips but are ultra sensitive to touch. Not any touch – only to the touch of an insect. How it tells is a complete mystery. When suitably touched the tentacle immediately folds inwards, flicking the insect into the central mass of sticky tentacles. There is no escape from these.

The rapid folding is the result of a line of cells in the base of the tentacle collapsing. This collapse is irreversible so the tentacle can only be active once. This is no great loss to the plant because with sustained growing conditions the leaf will be replaced with a new one in about three days. When in a harsh environment one

has to grow fast before conditions change.

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Useful wildflower guides are

**MFN's Flora Guide** by Eric Whiting covers most of the native wildflowers commonly seen in the Narrandera and Cocoparra Ranges, and which also occur in the other ranges and hills from Narrandera to the Lachlan River. 225 species are described with 136 colour photographs. A simplified key aids the identification of the plants, Price is \$25 (inc. GST) or \$20 to MFN members. Copies available at club meetings or Eric Whiting phone (02) 6953 2612 or Email: [ericwhiting4@bigpond.com](mailto:ericwhiting4@bigpond.com) or Leeton Visitor Information Centre have copies.

**Narrandera Landcare's [Spring Wildflower Walk 2-page guide](#)**. This has been prepared by Glenn Currie and contains photos of some of the common species flowering around this time of year, with QR codes which open links to give more information on each species, so you can increase your knowledge as you walk! You can download it from the Murrumbidgee Landcare website [mli.org.au/wildflower-walk-guide](http://mli.org.au/wildflower-walk-guide) if the link doesn't work.

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## Environment Minister's visit to Campbell's Wetlands - 26 August 2022



The Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek visited Campbell's Wetlands recently. Griffith City Council has received funding to upgrade the wooden boardwalk, the walking tracks and the bird hide at Campbell's Wetlands. Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists were originally responsible for installing these as well as managing all the native plantings around both Campbell's and Nericon wetlands. After 25 years or more they simply need renovating. This will make access for local and other visitors much more amenable.

Minister Plibersek was assisted in the tree planting by Kaden Maher, aged 5 who is the son of the Regional Landcare Facilitator Nicole Maher. Sue Chittick-Dalton was the club's representative on the day and she was able to chat to the minister about the bird hide and board walk. The CEO of Landcare Australia Dr Shane Norrish was there and dug the holes for us. We planted a Black Box *Eucalyptus largiflorens* and *Casuarina cunninghamia* along the pathway. The event which was organised by Murrumbidgee Landcare Inc, was very short notice and the Prime Minister was also going to attend but was delayed flying into Griffith. It was a great opportunity to showcase the work of the MFN and Landcare.

Nella Smith & Cathy Semmler (Secretary, Murrumbidgee Landcare Inc., Griffith)

Photos: Environment Minister, Tanya Plibersek meeting Sue Chittick-Dalton, Kaden Maher tree planting with Minister



## Know your daisies, Part 16 Yellow Everlastings and Sunrays

Although the Asteraceae family is named as per protocol from a 'typical' genus (Aster) and the family is commonly called the Daisy family, most members do not have any ray florets of the typical daisy or even of Dandelions, etc. The function of attracting pollinators has been developed otherwise from showy 'petals'. In the Everlastings and Sunrays the involucre bracts are coloured. In other members the florets are so massed as to give the whole flowerhead a bright colour as in the Billy and Beauty Buttons. These differences help in dividing this large group with only tubular florets into manageable sections.

### a) Yellow Everlastings and Sunrays with flowerheads in loose to dense clusters

#### *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*, Common Everlasting

Variable perennial herb, recorded in various communities and soil types, usually in open or disturbed sites. Branches  $\pm$  matted with woolly hairs (rarely absent). Leaves linear-lanceolate to oblanceolate or spatulate, margins flat or recurved. Flowerheads in compact clusters. Involucre bracts in several rows, outer bracts scarious, opaque golden-yellow or  $\pm$ tinged brown, ciliate; intermediate bracts longest.



#### *Chrysocephalum semipapposum*, Clustered Everlasting

Variable aromatic perennial herb, usually recorded in woodland and grassland of hills or mountains or on isolated rocky rises. Branches  $\pm$  woolly. Leaves linear, apex acute to apiculate, margins flat or  $\pm$ recurved. Flowerheads in compact corymbose clusters. Involucre bracts, outer woolly, opaque golden-yellow or  $\pm$ tinged brown, ciliate; innermost usually longest



#### *Rhodanthe moschata*, Musk Sunray

Annual herb recorded in varieties of communities, most frequently on sands and loams. Stems branching at base, to 20cm high, soft, grey-woolly. Leaves narrow-oblong to narrow-obovate. Flowerheads congested into globose clusters arranged in panicles. Involucre bracts not radiant except at tips, nearly glabrous, glossy. Florets enveloped in dense wool.

#### *Schoenia ramosissima*, Dainty Everlasting (syn *Helichrysum semifertile*)

Annual herb, recorded in drainage lines on open gibber plains or in rocky arid hills, usually on clay-loam soils. Plants 4-15cm high, sparingly to much-branched with ascending stems, unevenly woolly. Leaves narrow-linear, margins recurved, lamina with scattered glandular hairs, often woolly near base. Flowerheads in irregular compound leafy corymbs, peduncles woolly. Involucre bracts with spreading opaque white to yellow surfaces, in several rows, with the inner longest.

#### *Rutidosis helichrysoides*

Erect branched perennial herb, 25-50cm high, cottony to woolly. Recorded in a wide range of sites, often along watercourses and on floodplains. Leaves variable, oblanceolate to linear or  $\pm$  lanceolate, usually 20-80mm (long) x 2-10mm, margins  $\pm$ recurved, lamina  $\pm$ cottony to woolly. Flowerheads few to many in a corymb, 8-20mm diam. Involucre bracts 6-10mm long; outer scarious, yellowish to golden-brown, transversely wrinkled, long ciliate; inner similar with broad  $\pm$ herbaceous claw. Achenes papillose. Pappus of 5-7 spatulate scales.

## b) Yellow Everlastings and Sunrays with flowerheads terminal and solitary or few.

### *Xerochrysum bracteatum*, Golden Everlasting

Annual herb, recorded in open woodland or forest, usually on sandy to sandy-loam soils. Stems simple or rarely branched at base, ±scabrous-hairy. Leaves oblanceolate or narrow-elliptic to lanceolate, mostly 50-100 x 5-20mm, scabrous-pubescent especially on margins. Flowerheads in irregular leafy clusters, 25-30mm diam. Involucral bracts scarious, opaque, outer pale yellow to cream, often streaked reddish or brown; intermediate longest, bright yellow



### *Xerochrysum viscosum*, Sticky Everlasting (image left)

Like *Xerochrysum bracteatum* except stems usually much branched and leaves narrow-lanceolate or linear, 10-80 x 1-5mm, viscid. Flowerheads solitary or 2 to 3 together.

### *Rhodanthe diffusa*, Ascending Sunray

Annual herbs recorded in mallee, woodland and sclerophyll forest on red-brown soils and clay. Stems branching at base, 20-30cm high, sparsely woolly at apex. Leaves linear to narrow-oblong, 5-10mm long, 1-3mm wide, surfaces sparsely and minutely hispid. Flowerheads

solitary, 5-10mm diam (excluding rays). Involucral bracts radiant, glabrous, outer pale brown, inner elliptic, yellow (white elsewhere in the State), c7mm long. Achenes silky-pilose. Pappus of plumose bristles.



### *Rhodanthe polygalifolia*, Brilliant Sunray

Annual herb recorded in Mulga, and Bluebush communities on sandy to loamy red earths mostly west of the region. As above except stems to 15-30cm high and leaves narrow-oblong. Involucral bracts rounded.

### *Hyalosperma glutinosum*, Golden Sunray

Erect or ascending herb, 10-20cm high, recorded on treeless plains. Leaves slender terete, 5-10 x c0.2mm, apex obtuse; inflorescence heads solitary, turbinate to hemispherical, c6mm long; involucral bracts in several rows, outer bracts brown, glossy, inner bracts yellow lamina elliptic, 3-5mm long. Achenes smooth with a central brown seed surrounded by a broad translucent papillose pericarp.

### *Hyalosperma praecox*, Mayweed Sunray

Erect or ascending herb, to 15cm high, recorded in open situations on sand or heavy loam. Leaves slender semi-terete, 10-15 x c0.2mm. Flower heads solitary, almost hemispherical, 15-25mm diam. involucral bracts in several rows, all white or all yellow, inner bracts narrow-elliptic, 7-10mm long. Achenes smooth to warty, glabrous. pappus plumose.

### *Hyalosperma semisterile*, Orange Sunray

Erect or ascending herb, to 15cm high but often <10cm, recorded in woodland or exposed places. Stems branching at base. Leaves slender semi-terete, 5-15 x c0.2mm. Flowerheads solitary, broadly cup-shaped, c4mm diam. Involucral bracts silver to pale brown, inner ovate, 2-5mm long, yellow. Achenes warty. Pappus plumose.



### *Leucochrysum albicans*, Hoary Sunray

Erect perennial herb, to 45cm high, recorded in wide range of communities and habitats. Leaves crowded around base of stems, linear to oblong or broad-ovate, flat, 25-100 x 1-9mm, woolly. Flowerheads 20-40mm diam. Involucral bracts spreading from base; outer sessile, oblong to ovate, straw-coloured to pale brown or purple; inner with long stipe and triangular to narrow-elliptic, white or yellow lamina, woolly at base. Achenes with warty, transparent pericarp. Pappus plumose.



***Leucochrysum molle*, Hoary Sunray**

Erect branching annual herb, to 30cm high, recorded in light scrub on heavy soils. Similar to above except leaves narrow-oblongate, to 70mm x 2-6mm, flat. Flowerheads 20-30mm diam. Outer involucral bracts hyaline to pale brown..

***Helichrysum rutidolepis*, Pale Everlasting**

Perennial decumbent herb, recorded usually in moist sites in sclerophyll forest and woodland. Stem much-branched, 15-40cm high, minutely glandular hairs. Leaves linear to narrow-oblongate, mostly 25-80 x 1.5-8mm, margins recurved, and often woolly, upper surface scabrous with tubercle-based hairs. Flowerheads solitary, terminal on long stalks bearing reduced leaves broad campanulate, 10-15mm diam. Achenes angular, glabrous. Pappus of fine hairs fused at base, mostly barbellate.

**Eric Whiting**

**Orchids and (not) Orchids**

Johanna and I were strolling Scenic Hill for orchids. We came across some interesting looking leaves and flower stalks and decided to return later when they had time to flower. Next visit they were still leaf and I struggled to find a flower, eventually a few more flower stalks were found but still no orchid flower.

Now these things were tiny, too small to see detail by eye in the field, but when I got home with the pics and blew them up on the screen, I could see that the flower stalks were not orchid at all. They had two rows of cups.

The plant is a fern, Adders Tongue (*Ophioglossum lusitanicum* ssp. *coriaceum*) and the cups are spore cases. They like moist open conditions so this season probably suits them.

The species has a distribution through NW Africa coast and islands, Portugal, France, the Mediterranean, Caucasus, India and Vietnam. The subspecies is found in South America and Australia where it is widely distributed. It is a puzzling distribution.

The Atlas has multiple records of this plant from Cocoparra National Park but no records (yet) from Scenic Hill, where I have found four patches now while orchid dorking.



Orchids I spotted were Pink Fingers, Green Spider, Leopard, Midget and Dwarf Greenhood.

**Neil Palframan**

Photos: from top  
A typical patch of Adders Tongue  
A plant with three leaves and three stalks, they can have up to five; the stalk with its spore bearing cups (right);  
Green Spider Orchid



## Parrots of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area

[as it appeared in #136, February 2007 re-printed in memory of Max

A visit at the weekend by a friend, Allan Richards, from Sydney to attend the Bird Fair has prompted me to write about the wealth of parrot species in our immediate area. A discussion with Allan after an early morning visit to a dam in Binya State Forest to watch birds coming in to drink followed by a 9 o'clock visit to Griffith airport/golf links led us to the conclusion that there would be no other place in Australia and possibly the world (!) where you could find such a large number of parrot species in such a comparatively small area.

Actually, the main reason why Leeton/Griffith was the area I settled on in considering a place to retire was prompted chiefly by (i) this large parrot diversity and (ii) the many wetlands in the vicinity. I had written an article for the Cairns BOCA newsletter after several visits to the area 8 years ago and pointed out then how many parrot species are possible in the MIA. I wasn't aware then that there was also an isolated population of Glossy Black Cockatoo also resident in the Leeton/Narrandera area.

The list, as far as I am aware comprises 17 either resident or seasonal species with a couple more vagrant species possible at times through the year.

The following are the 17 regulars with an indication of their reliability and possible location (places where I take visitors to see them with a high degree of reliability):



**Major Mitchell (Pink) Cockatoo** – Griffith golf course (early morning & late afternoon)

**Sulphur Crested (White) Cockatoo** – anywhere close to the river or in towns

**Galah** – where can't you find them!

**Little Corella** – my most reliable spot is the playing fields at St Francis College, Leeton

**Long-billed Corella** – as above, but not when the oval is being used (early morning)

**Glossy Black Cockatoo** – the hills around Leeton and Narrandera (at dusk around dams)

**Cockatiel** – often seen between Griffith and Leeton and also at Tuckerbil

**Mallee Ringneck** – Binya State Forest is the most reliable spot

**Superb Parrot** – river red gum forests mostly (Yanco reserve is very reliable in Spring)

**Eastern Rosella** – same as for the Superb and also around Narrandera

**Yellow (Crimson) Rosella** – as above and also in local gardens

**Red-rumped Parrot** – anywhere (2<sup>nd</sup> most common species after the Galah)



**Mulga Parrot** – Binya State Forest seems the stronghold of this species

**Blue-winged Parrot** – Tuckerbil is a good spot in winter/spring

**Turquoise Parrot** – Binya State Forest around dams in the early morning

**Blue Bonnet** – in more open country – Griffith golf course is the most reliable spot

**Budgerigar** – not reliable but Tuckerbil seems to have a small group in winter/spring

Other possibilities at times during the year could be;

**Rainbow Lorikeet** – a small population seems to have established itself in Griffith

**Swift Parrot** – can be heard/seen flying over the area in their migration – spring/autumn

**Musk Lorikeet, Little Lorikeet and Purple-crowned Lorikeet** – could be possible

**Regent Parrot** – a rare seasonal possibility in the south (Darlington Point/Coleambally?)



**Photos by David Kleinert**  
From top Red-rumped Parrot,  
Eastern Ringneck, Eastern Rosella

If any member would like to add to this or comment on any of the number of parrot species I have listed, please do so as I think this is an excellent selling point for the area along with Fivebough, Tuckerbil, Campbell's and Nericon wetlands. So many birdwatchers I know were first attracted to birding as a hobby because they knew about the many parrot and finch species we have in Australia from childhood experiences.

**Max O'Sullivan**

# MEMBERS' SIGHTINGS

These sightings are from members' observations. Please check with the relevant person before quoting any record.

<b>Echidna</b>	crossing Irrigation Way at Sunset - Wambulgal	early 08/22	Margaret Strong
<b>Mallee Ringneck</b>	Seville St., Leeton	07/08/22	Margrit Martin
<b>Smooth Cage (fungus)</b>	Cypress St., Leeton	07/08/22	Eric Whiitng-
<b>Ring-tailed Possum</b>	Narrandera Wetlands	08/08/22	Alan Whitehead
<b>Brush-tailed Possum</b>	Narrandera Wetlands	08/08/22	Alan Whitehead
<b>Red-capped Robin</b>	Narrandera Wetlands	08/08/22	Susan Whitehead
<b>Superb Fairywren</b> [2]	Narrandera Wetlands	08/08/22	Susan Whitehead
<b>Yellow Thornbills</b> [9]	Whitton	mid/08/22	Margaret Strong
<b>Superb Parrots</b> [12]	Whitton	several sightings during 08/22	Margaret Strong
<b>Peaceful Dove</b>	Whitton	heard calling late 08/22	Margaret Strong

## September is Save the Koala Month

What is Save the Koala Month?

<https://nationaltoday.com/save-the-koala-day/>

Save The Koala Month celebrations in September each year was started by the Australian Koala Foundation. Save The Koala Day is celebrated on September 30 every year. The objective of these celebrations is simple — to save the koalas and their natural habitats, and raise awareness to prevent them from going extinct. Koalas are an important part of Australian wildlife.



However, today they face the danger of disappearing due to human activities reducing/fragmenting habitat with car strikes, dogs attacks, the climate crisis and disease. You can do your part to prevent the unthinkable from happening learning more about koalas and their habitat, planting *Eucalyptus* trees in koala areas and by raising funds and donating to organisations that are committed to caring for the koala population.

### Narrandera Koala Fest

We are privileged to have a healthy local koala population in Narrandera (including the Narrandera Common, Narrandera Nature Reserve and the Narrandera Regional Park, spreading as far as Grong Grong and Darlington Point). Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists, Landcare, wildlife groups and I will be having displays and posters at the Narrandera Koala Fest.

Narrandera Koala Fest is being held 10.00am – 9.00pm on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September at Narrandera Showground, 35-45 Elizabeth St, Narrandera. Entry is free and there will be loads of displays and fun activities to enjoy.

For more information see <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/narrandera-koala-fest-tickets-399257318387>

Joanne Connolly

**Please Note: MFN will have a display stand at the Fest see coming events for how you can help. Ed.**

# \*\*\*\* COMING EVENTS \*\*\*\*

Please note all outings are subject to weather conditions. Please register with the nominated person. Any Covid-19 restrictions need to be adhered to. Please consider others and do not attend if feeling sick or if you have been a close contact in the week beforehand.

- 8 September Thursday**      **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at 7pm.  
**Topic: To be decided**  
**Bring along Show and Tell**  
**Contact:** Dione Russell 0428 536 290  
**Email:** [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com)
- 10 September Saturday**      **Outing to Taleeban Mining Reserve**  
This is mallee country, an opportunity to see this country in Spring.  
**Meet** at the corner of Burley Griffin Way and Erigolia Road @ 8.30am  
**Bring:** morning tea and lunch.  
**Register with Dione Russell** [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com), phone 0428 536 290.
- 14 September Wednesday**      **Weekly bird survey organised by Sarah Danckert.** Locations rotating every 2 months. They will be posted on Facebook, WhatsApp or text 0427 276 306. Poor weather, we'll meet at the Birdhouse Bar & Kitchen 246 Baylis St. Wagga  
**Meet at the Silvalite Reserve, at Red Hill Rd cycle path at 4:00pm**
- 17 September Saturday**      **Koala Festival at Narrandera**  
**MFN will be having a display stand** so members will be welcomed to come and help man it, help would also be appreciated with setting up and packing up. Many hands make light work. Let Nella know when you are available.  
**Please contact: Nella Smith** Email: [nellasmith0@gmail.com](mailto:nellasmith0@gmail.com) Phone 0428 890 537  
For general information, contact the Narrandera Visitor Information Centre.
- 5 October Wednesday**      **Copy for the October newsletter is due. Please send to Rowena.**  
**Email:** [ericwhiting4@bigpond.com](mailto:ericwhiting4@bigpond.com). Phone: 6953 2612.
- 7-8 October**      **Leeton Show – MFN will be having a display stand**  
**Friday midday – 9pm**      People are needed to help set up on Friday morning and pack up on the  
**Saturday 9am to 2pm**      Saturday afternoon. Also to man it during open hours  
**Please contact: Dione Russell** [dioneerussell@gmail.com](mailto:dioneerussell@gmail.com) phone 0428 536 290.
- 9 October Sunday**      **Walla Walla Swamp**  
Meet at the Swamp at 9:30am Leader: Sarah Danckert 0427 276 306  
**RSVP: 6 October** [spdanckert@gmail.com](mailto:spdanckert@gmail.com)
- 13 October Thursday**      **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at 7pm.  
**Topic: To be decided**  
**Contact:** Dione Russell 0428 536 290  
**Email:** [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com)
- 22 -23 October**      **Twitchathon 2022**  
**Saturday and/or Sunday**      This a competition in which small teams record as many bird species they can in a set time. It is a fund raising event with money to a specific birding project.
- OTHER EVENT**
- 11 September Sunday**      **Wagga Wagga Urban Landcare guided bird walk at Pomingalarna Reserve**  
Meet at the Pomingalarna carpark on Bagley Drive by 9am.  
RSVP to Steve Moore by SMS 0411 645 243.